

Characters

- PAUL GREEN: A well-meaning American, age 30
- MR` SANDOR: A Hungarian bureaucrat, age 50
- EVE SANDOR: Mr` Sandor's daughter, age 24
- MR` KOVACS: A friend of Mr` Sandor, age 48
- THE WAITER
- THE DOCTOR
- THE BARBER

All the above are members of a well-mannered working class. It is suggested that Mr` Kovacs, the Waiter, the Doctor and the Barber be played by the same actor.

Scene 1

Scene 1

A neighborhood cafe in Budapest, Mr` Sandor sits at a table. He wears a brown suit, a white shirt and a black tie and shoes. On the table is a shot glass containing spirits and a newspaper which he has folded to a manageable size. Paul approaches him. He wears a tweed jacket and hat, a wool plaid shirt and wool tie and trousers.

ON TAPE "Unit One, Basic sentences, Paul Green meets Mr` Sandor and his daughter Eve." Also include dialogue in English and Hungarian up to "Are you Hungarian?"

PAUL GREEN

//Good afternoon Mr` Sandor.// I believe we met at the Smith's last night.

MR. SANDOR

//Yes, I remember. Your name is Paul Green.

PAUL GREEN

//Yes.

MR. SANDOR

(*Standing and shaking Paul's hand.*)

//Please, take a seat.

(*They sit.*)

PAUL GREEN

//Thank you.

MR. SANDOR

//Are you Hungarian?

PAUL GREEN

Oh no. I'm from the U`S`

MR. SANDOR

What is new in the: U`S`?

PAUL GREEN

The weather is bad.

MR. SANDOR

Is that so?

PAUL GREEN

Yes, we have not had good weather.

MR. SANDOR

I see.

PAUL GREEN

And how is the weather in Budapest?

MR. SANDOR

It has been bad. We have not had good weather. Are you visiting Budapest?

PAUL GREEN

No. I have come here to study and work. My company has sent me here.

MR. SANDOR

What is your line of work, Mr` Green?

PAUL GREEN

Metal production.

MR. SANDOR

I am glad to hear that. I have a son and two daughters and they all study. The eldest, my son, works and studies; my eldest daughter studies and she is not working presently. And my youngest daughter is studying and she has not yet started to work.

PAUL GREEN

What do they study?

MR. SANDOR

My eldest daughter studies German, English and Hungarian. The youngest studies accounting.

PAUL GREEN

And what does your son study?

MR. SANDOR

My son is an aviator and he studies German. Some say German is the language of the future. Others say English is the language of the future. That is why Eve studies both.

PAUL GREEN

Hungarian is the language of the future.

(*They laugh.*)

MR. SANDOR

Hungarian may be the language of poetry but not of the future. I don't see very much poetry in the future. Do you?

PAUL GREEN

No, I don't.

MR. SANDOR

You must be a practical man.

PAUL GREEN

Yes. I think so.

MR. SANDOR

So is my son. He flies a commercial plane. Yesterday he went up with his youngest daughter. Have you ever been up in a plane, Mr. Green?

PAUL GREEN

No, I haven't.

MR. SANDOR

I haven't either. One day I may go up with my son. I am looking forward to being so high up in the air that a house would look like a speck in the distance. Would you care for a cigarette?

(*He offers Paul a cigarette.*)

PAUL GREEN

(*Taking it.*)

Thanks. Hungarian cigarette?

MR. SANDOR

No, this is a German cigarette. It is from a German factory like airplanes and shoes.

PAUL GREEN

Thank you very much.

(*He puts the cigarette in his pocket.*)

Thanks.

MR. SANDOR

What have you seen in Budapest?

PAUL GREEN

I have not seen very much yet. Since I arrived I have worked and I have attended school. I also spent time looking for a place to live.

MR. SANDOR

Have you found a place?

PAUL GREEN

Yes, I have found a room in a hotel on Maria Street.

(*Eve enters. She wears a lightweight two-piece suit. She stands at the door looking out.*)

MR. SANDOR

Here is my daughter Eve. Eve, please come here.

(*Eve approaches.*)

I should like to introduce Mr` Paul Green from the U` S`

(*Paul stands.*)

EVE SANDOR

(*Shaking hands.*)

Glad to meet you.

PAUL GREEN

Thank you.

EVE SANDOR

But, please, take a seat.

(*They sit.*)

PAUL GREEN

Thanks. Very gladly.

EVE SANDOR

Do you understand Hungarian? I speak English.

PAUL GREEN

I understand Hungarian.

MR. SANDOR

She understands German, English and Hungarian.

EVE SANDOR

Do you understand German?

PAUL GREEN

I don't understand German.

EVE SANDOR

But you speak Hungarian very well.

PAUL GREEN

I studied Hungarian in the U'S' My firm had me take special courses in Hungarian. They have a Hungarian affiliated firm.

(*She offers him a cigarette.*)

EVE SANDOR

Would you care for a cigarette?

PAUL GREEN

(*Taking it.*)

Thanks.

(*Putting it in his pocket.*)

Thank you very much. I believe I have seen you on Baross Street, Miss Sandor.

EVE SANDOR

Oh, yes. We live on Baross Street.

PAUL GREEN

I live on Maria Street.

EVE SANDOR

We live near each other. Maria Street crosses Baross Street.

PAUL GREEN

How far is my house from yours?

EVE SANDOR

Your house is five minutes from ours.

PAUL GREEN

I saw you in the bakery.

EVE SANDOR

I go there each day. I buy bread in the bakery on Baross Street.

PAUL GREEN

How fortunate.

EVE SANDOR

Yes. Have you lived here long?

PAUL GREEN

Not very long. I have lived here two weeks.

EVE SANDOR

This is not the most elegant part of Budapest. But it is very convenient. We are near the shops and it is economical. We have nice parks and the streets are clean.

PAUL GREEN

Maybe you'll be so good as to show me the parks, Miss Sandor.

EVE SANDOR

I'll be glad to.

PAUL GREEN

Thank you.

EVE SANDOR

I am free in the early evening, before dinner.

PAUL GREEN

Would you be free tomorrow at this time?

EVE SANDOR

Yes.

PAUL GREEN

How very fortunate.

(*To Mr` Sandor.*)

Mr` Sandor, at what time is dinner in Budapest?

MR. SANDOR

Dinner is around eight p`m` Breakfast around eight o'clock. Lunch between twelve and one.

EVE SANDOR

Sometimes we eat a morning snack too.

PAUL GREEN

What do you eat for breakfast as a rule?

EVE SANDOR

For breakfast, we drink tea or coffee. Sometimes we eat an egg too, with bread or a roll and butter.

MR. SANDOR

In the afternoon, women especially drink coffee. They customarily do. In the morning before work men usually drink palinka in a cafe.

PAUL GREEN

Will you be free tomorrow till eight, Miss Sandor?

EVE SANDOR

I will be free tomorrow till eight. I usually go home at seven. But tomorrow my father will cook. On Thursdays he likes to cook goulash. My father is a very good cook.

PAUL GREEN

Are you a good cook, Miss Sandor?

EVE SANDOR

I am also a good cook. Do you like to cook, Mr' Green?

PAUL GREEN

I am not a very good cook. I only know how to make eggs, toast, boiled potatoes and a steak. What forms of entertainment are there in Budapest, Miss Sandor?

EVE SANDOR

In Budapest there is dancing. There is swimming in the baths. There is music in the parks and concert halls. There are picnics in the countryside and there are theatres and movies.

PAUL GREEN

Do you enjoy the movies, Mr' Sandor?

MR. SANDOR

I do.

PAUL GREEN

Do you, Miss Sandor?

EVE SANDOR

Oh yes.

PAUL GREEN

(*To Eve.*)

May I invite you to the movies?

EVE SANDOR

Yes, thank you.

PAUL GREEN

Mr' Sandor, would you come to the movies also?

MR. SANDOR

I would be glad to. I often go to the movies.

PAUL GREEN

Would you like to go tonight?

MR. SANDOR

Not tonight. I am expecting my friend Mr` Kovacs tonight. He is coming for dinner. But Eve may join you. She likes the movies very much.

PAUL GREEN

(*To Eve.*)

Do you know at what time the movie starts?

EVE SANDOR

I believe it begins at eight.

PAUL GREEN

Do you know what is playing?

EVE SANDOR

We can look in the evening paper.

MR. SANDOR

This is the morning paper.

EVE SANDOR

It is not evening yet.

PAUL GREEN

I will bring the paper when I come.

MR. SANDOR

We must leave now.

(*Giving Paul a card.*)

9 Baross Street. First floor. Second door to the left.

PAUL GREEN

Thank you.

(*Mr` Sandor and Eve stand. Paul stands.*)

MR. SANDOR

We have a dining room, two bedrooms, a kitchen and a bathroom. The bathroom is very good because it has hot and cold water.

(*Paul gives Mr` Sandor his own card.*)

PAUL GREEN

This is my card.

MR. SANDOR

(*Giving the card to Eve.*)

Thank you.

PAUL GREEN

Thank you.

MR. SANDOR, PAUL, EVE

Good bye.

(*Eve and Mr. Sandor exit left. Paul exits right. "The Blue Danube" is heard. As the scenery is changed, smoke goes up from the stage floor.*)

Scene 2

Scene 2

On the banks of the Danube. There is a view of Budapest. There is a bench. Mr. Sandor, Eve, Mr. Kovacs and Paul enter.

ON TAPE: "Unit Two. Basic sentences. Mr. Sandor, Kovacs, Eve and Paul discuss their relatives by the Danube." The scene is performed without a tape.

MR. KOVACS

Of my sons, one is a doctor, one is a soldier, and the other is a clerk.

EVE SANDOR

When I have a son, I would like for him to be a teacher.

MR. KOVACS

I always wanted one of my sons to be a soldier, like my father. And one did become a soldier.

MR. SANDOR

Was that Stephen?

MR. KOVACS

No, Stephen is not a soldier.

MR. SANDOR

He is a clerk.

MR. KOVACS

He works in a factory. George is the soldier. What does your brother do, Mr. Green?

PAUL GREEN

My brother is a farmer and so is my father. And my sister is a nurse.

MR. KOVACS

I am a tailor.

PAUL GREEN

And is your brother a tailor too?

MR. KOVACS

No, my brother isn't a tailor. He's a shoemaker. He makes shoes. I have one cousin who is a tailor, and another who is a mason.

MR. SANDOR

My father's father was a mason. But he also did plumbing like his cousin.

EVE SANDOR

My father's cousin was a seamstress and her daughter was a teacher. They live in Paks. Is your niece married, Mr. Kovacs?

MR. KOVACS

Yes. She's married. Her husband is a carpenter. He has his own shop. And she is a stenographer. Today women work as well as men.

MR. SANDOR

Yes, my brother works in an armament factory and his wife works in the same plant.

MR. KOVACS

My nephew also works in the same factory. And his brother is a waiter. He works the early shift.

MR. SANDOR

I am a clerk in the custom house. I have worked there since I was young.

MR. KOVACS

I have a nephew who is a barber. He owns his own shop. Another cousin is a doctor. He is a good doctor. Well, good bye now. I want to buy cigarettes before the stores close.

(*To Eve.*)

Good bye.

(*To Paul.*)

I enjoyed the movies, Mr. Green. I like American movies.

PAUL GREEN

Thank you.

MR. KOVACS

Good bye.

MR. SANDOR

I'll go with you. Good bye.

ALL

Good bye.

(*Kovacs and Mr. Sandor exit. There is a pause.*)

PAUL GREEN

The city is very beautiful.

EVE SANDOR

Yes, it is. Budapest lies on two sides of the Danube. Buda is on the right side. Pest is on the left. Between the two towns there are six bridges. From the mountains of Buda you can see Pest. On the Pest side is Parliament. The cathedral is not far. Budapest is full of baths. For example the one on Margaret Island. That bath is very beautiful. There's hot and cold water. The island lies in the middle of the Danube.

PAUL GREEN

Eve, come with me to a cafe. There's one not far from my hotel.

EVE SANDOR

Let's go.

(*They start to go.*)

You can bathe in the Danube but the water is too cold. The weather is bad. It has changed.

(*They exit. "The Blue Danube" is heard. As the scenery is changed, smoke goes up from the stage floor.*)

Scene 3

Scene 3

The restaurant. It is a working class restaurant. There is a table and two chairs. The table is set with glasses, silver dishes and napkins. Paul and Eve enter. They are cheerful.

ON TAPE: "Unit Three. Basic sentences. Paul and Eve go to the restaurant." Also include dialogue in English and Hungarian up to "Yes, here's one."

PAUL GREEN

//Here comes the waiter.

WAITER

//What do you wish?

PAUL GREEN

//Have you a table for two?

WAITER

//Yes, here's one.

(*They sit. The Waiter gets a water pitcher and a menu. He walks to the table, gives them the menu and pours water.*)

WAITER

Will you have lunch?

PAUL GREEN

Yes, both of us.

EVE SANDOR

What soup do you have?

WAITER

Beef broth.

PAUL GREEN

Bring two beef broth.

EVE SANDOR

What sort of meat is there?

WAITER

There is chicken with paprika. There is cold and hot ham.

PAUL GREEN

I'd like fish.

WAITER

I'm very sorry but there is no fish.

EVE SANDOR

Then bring the chicken.

WAITER

Would you like some wine?

EVE SANDOR

I only want a glass of water.

PAUL GREEN

I would like a glass of white wine.

(*The Waiter exits.*)

PAUL GREEN

Where shall we go this afternoon?

EVE SANDOR

We could go to a museum.

PAUL GREEN

Which museum?

EVE SANDOR

The economic museum is very interesting.

PAUL GREEN

Where is the economic museum?

EVE SANDOR

Not very far.

(*The Waiter enters with soup and puts it on the table.*)

PAUL GREEN

Thank you.

WAITER

With pleasure.

PAUL GREEN

Shall we go by car?

EVE SANDOR

The streetcar is much cheaper. And you can see the town from the window. One comes every minute.

PAUL GREEN

I would also like to do some shopping.

EVE SANDOR

What would you like to buy?

PAUL GREEN

A present for my sister. Another for my mother. I also have to buy something for my brother and presents for my niece and nephew.

EVE SANDOR

... Paul ...

(*Paul looks at Eve.*)

Are you leaving Budapest?

PAUL GREEN

Yes. I have been asked to return to the U`S`

(*There is a sudden sound of plaintive music which continues playing through the following dialogue. Paul and Eve are distressed.*)

EVE SANDOR

Oh, no.

PAUL GREEN

Yes.

EVE SANDOR

How soon?

PAUL GREEN

In two weeks.

EVE SANDOR

Please, don't go.

PAUL GREEN

I don't want to go.

EVE SANDOR

Please, don't go.

PAUL GREEN

I want to stay.

EVE SANDOR

It will never be the same without you. I feel cold. Is it winter yet?

(*The Waiter enters with the menu.*)

WAITER

We have no more chicken. Would you like the hot ham?

EVE SANDOR

No, thank you.

WAITER

Would you like some hot ham?

PAUL GREEN

No, thank you.

WAITER

You should eat when you can. The crops have not been good. Would you like some dessert.

PAUL GREEN

What desserts do you have?

WAITER

We have apple pie, ice cream, and fresh fruit. May I suggest the fresh fruit?

(*The Waiter and Eve freeze. The music stops.*)

PAUL GREEN

(*Speaking rapidly.*)

I came from a country where we hear out suggestions. We invented the suggestion box. The best suggestion may come from the least expected place. We value ideas. We don't hesitate to put ideas to practice. We consider ideas that are given to us. We don't hold back our suggesting of ideas for fear of appearing foolish. We are not afraid to appear foolish, as good ideas disguise themselves in foolishness. We are not afraid to appear foolish. We are the foolish race.

EVE SANDOR

(*As if in a trance.*)

I'll have fresh fruit.

WAITER

Sir?

PAUL GREEN

I'll have fresh fruit.

WAITER

You are foolish but oh how fast you move forward.

EVE SANDOR

Please, let's go to a cafe.

(*As she stands, her chair falls to the floor. Paul picks up the chair and turns to where the Waiter exited.*)

PAUL GREEN

Waiter, please, give me the bill.

(*The Waiter enters. Eve faints.*)

WAITER

You don't want fresh fruit?

PAUL GREEN

No, thank you.

(*The Waiter starts writing the bill. Paul starts to pay. He is distressed and disoriented. He drops bills and coins, picks them up, puts a bill on the Waiter's tray, takes money from, another pocket, drops more coins and bills, and puts two bills on the Waiter's tray.*)

WAITER

Thank you.

(*The Waiter moves to the up left corner and stands in a very straight stylized position. Paul picks up Eve's napkin, puts it on the table, and freezes with knees bent in an almost squatting position. Eve also freezes. The Waiter speaks rapidly in a declamatory manner. Through the course of the speech he gradually raises the tray which he holds with both hands in front of him.*)

We are concerned with quality. That which is lasting. Craftsmanship. A thing of quality always ends up being heavy. We have preferred quality to anything else. We wish for things to last but we tire of them. We are buried under the stones of buildings, iron grates, heavy shoes, woolen garments, heavy sheets, foods that smell potent like the caves in the black forest. Hands that cut, knead and saw and measure and chisel and sweat into everything we see. Pots that are too heavy to use. Shoes that delay our walk. Sheets that make our sleep a slumber. -Americans sleep light and wake up briskly. You create life

each day. Here, the little trousers a boy wears to school are waiting for him at the store before he is born. We are dark. Americans are bright. -You crave mobility. The car. You move from city to city so as not to grow stale. You don't stay too long in a place. A person who lives too long in the same house is suspect. It's someone who is held back. Friction keeps a stone polished. Mobility. You are alert. You get in and out of cars limberly. That is your grace. Our grace is weighty. Not yours. You worship the long leg and loose hip joint. How else to jump in and out of cars. You dress light. You travel light. You are light on your feet. You are light hearted and a light heart is a pump that brings you to motion. You aim to alight, throw the load overboard. Alight the flight. You are responsible. That is not a burden. You are responsible to things that move forward. You are responsible to the young. Not so much to the old. The old do not move forward. You will find a way for the old to move forward, have them join in your thrust. Solving a problem is not a burden to you. A problem solved is a lifting of a burden. Egyptians lifted heavy stones to build monuments. You lift them to get rid of heavy stones. Get rid of them! Obstacles! You are efficient. You simplify life. Paper work. Your forms are shorter, so is your period of obligation. Work. Your hours are shorter and you have more time to sit on the lawn in your cotton trousers.

(He lowers the tray. Eve comes to. Paul helps her up.)

EVE SANDOR

Let's take a streetcar.

PAUL GREEN

Let's go.

(They exit. Music plays. The Waiter exits. As the scenery is changed smoke goes up from the stage floor.)

Scene 4

Scene 4

In the garden. There are dried leaves. There is a cement pillar, the top of which is cut at a slant with a cloth sculpted over it. The word "True" is engraved on the base. The sound tape contains only the Hungarian phrases.

EVE SANDOR

//This may be the last time I come here.// Here is where I first kissed you.//I kissed you that day, you know.//I kissed you because I could not help myself.// Now again I try to exert control over myself// and I can't.//I try to appear content and I can't.//I know I look distressed.// I feel how my face quivers. And my blood feels thin.// And I can hardly breathe. And my skin feels dry.//I have no power to show something other than what I feel.// I am destroyed. And even if I try,// my lips will not smile.// Instead I cling to you and make it harder for you.// Leave now.// Leave me here looking at the leaves.// Good bye.// If I don't look at you it may be that I can let you go.

(Paul kisses her. Music plays. Lights fade. As the scenery is changed smoke goes up from the stage floor.)

Scene 5

Scene 5

Paul's bedroom. It is almost dawn. Eve and Paul lie on a cot by the window. Eve's head lies on Paul's chest. They are covered with a sheet. The sound tape includes the complete dialogue in both English and Hungarian.

EVE SANDOR

Silence ... // Silence // Adieu ... // Adieu ... // Hold me this last time.// And kiss me.// Kiss me one more time.

(They kiss. She puts her head down on his chest again and caresses his eyes with her fingers.)

//Adieu ... Farewell to your eyes.// I will never see them.// Farewell, sweet eyes.

PAUL GREEN

//This cannot be.// I will stay.// I must stay.// Marry me, sweet

EVE SANDOR

// I will marry you.

EVE SANDOR

//Oh, Paul, you love me.// You do. You love me.// You do.// You will be happy since I love you so.

PAUL GREEN

//I'll never say adieu again.

(*The sky outside the window is lit.*)

PAUL GREEN

//Look, here is the dawn.

(*Lights fade. Music plays. As the scenery is changed, smoke goes up from the stage floor.*)

Scene 6

Scene 6

By a castle. Eve looks out to the left. There is the sound of a fox-trot. She dances a little in place. Paul enters with two glasses. He puts the glasses down and takes her by the waist. They dance for a while. The music ends. They continue dancing. The scene is performed without a language tape.

EVE SANDOR

The music ended.

PAUL GREEN

If I tried, I could not stop.

(*Lights fade. There is the sound of Eve's panting. The lights come up. Eve is standing against the wall. She holds a drink in her hand. Her mouth and eyes are wide open. Paul is lying on the floor. His body is contorted. His face is in a grimace. There is an eerie sound.*)

EVE SANDOR

... Paull --

(*Lights fade. There is music. As the scenery is changed, smoke goes up from the stage floor.*)

Scene 7

Scene 7

It is Paul's room. There is a table and two chairs. Paul has a blood pressure device attached to his arm. He is sitting on the upstage side of the table. The Doctor sits to the right. There is a doctor's case on the floor to the right of the Doctor. They both suffer slight physical contortions, an ankle, a shoulder, a few fingers. All other characters suffer the same contortions. As the play advances these contortions will become more extreme.

ON TAPE: "Unit Seven. Basic sentences. Paul Green is examined by the Doctor." The sound tape includes the complete dialogue in both English and Hungarian.

DOCTOR

//Your blood is thin.// Have you been eating well?

PAUL GREEN

//Yes.

(*The Doctor looks into Paul's eyes.*)

DOCTOR

//Come here, closer to the light.

(*They go upstage to the window, he looks again at his eye. He takes his pulse.*)

//Let me see your tongue.

(*Paul sticks his tongue out. The Doctor puts a tongue depressor on it.*)

//Say ahh.

PAUL GREEN

Ahh.

(*The Doctor walks back to the table.*)

DOCTOR

(*Thoughtfully.*)

//It's nothing serious.// Sit down.//

(*Paul sits.*)

What you have is common.// Thin blood.// A white throat.// The eyes secrete mucus.// You feel very ill.// And yet the symptoms are not serious.// Do you excrete normally?

PAUL GREEN

//No.

DOCTOR

//This is common.

PAUL GREEN

//What is causing it?

(*The Doctor writes.*)

DOCTOR

//Does your wife suffer from this too?

PAUL GREEN

//I think so.

DOCTOR

//Not as severely?

PAUL GREEN

//No.

DOCTOR

(*Still writing.*)

//Take a train to Fured.// There, repose yourself.// Drink this tonic four times a day.// Sleep. And don't worry.

(*He takes his bag and stands up to leave. He takes a last look at Paul's eyes, ears, teeth. He feels his forehead. He looks at his fingernails. He then takes a handkerchief from his pocket and puts it over Paul's nose.*)

//Blow your nose on this.

(*Paul does. The Doctor looks at the secretion in the handkerchief, puts it in his pocket and exits. Lights fade. There is music. As the scenery is changed, smoke goes up from the stage floor.*)

Scene 8

Scene 8

Paul's room. There is a table set with soup dishes. Mr` Sandor sits on the up right side. Mr` Kovacs sits on the down left side. Paul stands stage right. Eve stands stage left.

ON TAPE: "Unit Eight. Basic sentences. Paul and Eve Green invite Mr` Sandor and Mr` Kovacs for dinner," The scene is performed without a language tape.

Eve starts to exit left. Paul follows her.

EVE SANDOR

Please, you don't need to come. I can serve.

(*Eve exits. Paul follows her.*)

MR. KOVACS

(*To Mr` Sandor.*)

Do you know how to cook?

MR. SANDOR

Of course. When my wife died I learned to cook. Eve was only seven. The boy and I did the housework.

MR. KOVACS

I also know how to cook; and so does my younger brother. We Hungarians like good food.

(*Eve and Paul enter carrying soup in metal cups. They pour the soup and sit, Eve on the down side, Paul on the up left side.*)

Do you know how to cook, Mr` Green?

PAUL GREEN

I only know how to make eggs, toast, boil potatoes and cook a steak; fried or grilled in the oven or barbequed.

MR. KOVACS

That is plenty.

PAUL GREEN

It would not be interesting to eat this every day.

MR. KOVACS

What?

PAUL GREEN

Eggs, toast, boiled potatoes and steak.

MR. KOVACS

That would be too much.

PAUL GREEN

Do you know how to cook, Mr` Kovacs?

MR. KOVACS

I know how to make chicken paprika and beef goulash.

MR. SANDOR

I make cabbage soup: with beef.

EVE SANDOR

Is the soup good?

MR. KOVACS

It is good.

MR. SANDOR

It is as good as I ever had.

MR. KOVACS

I have a feeling Honved is not winning today.

MR. SANDOR

I think Honved is winning.

MR. KOVACS

How could Honved win? It is not a good team.

MR. SANDOR

Honved is a very good team. It is better than MTK.

MR. KOVACS

Oh no. MTK is better than Honved.

MR. SANDOR

Not at all. Honved is the leading team. It wins all the time.

MR. KOVACS

It is not better. It is worse. They just have better luck.

MR. SANDOR

You don't win soccer with luck, Kovacs.

MR. KOVACS

Honved does.

MR. SANDOR

Paul, what is it Americans call a bad loser? Is Kovacs a bad loser ... is he?

(*Paul smiles. Mr` Sandor speaks to Kovacs.*)

You're a bad loser.

MR. KOVACS

Do you play soccer, Paul?

PAUL GREEN

In the U`S`, we don't play soccer. We play football, baseball and basketball.

MR. KOVACS

(*To Mr` Sandor.*)

I never knew that. Did you know that, Henry?

MR. SANDOR

I did. Football, baseball and basketball are American games. Soccer is not.

(*Paul faints. Eve stands and looks at him alarmed.*)

EVE SANDOR

He has not been well.

(*Pause.*)

And neither have I.

(*Mr` Sandor and Kovacs look at each other and lower their heads. Lights fade. There is music. As the scenery is changed, smoke goes up from the stage floor.*)

Scene 9

Scene 9

A sanatorium. There is a small desk and chair. To the left there is a cot. On the back wall there is a moonlit mountain peak. Paul is wearing pajamas, a robe, and slippers. He is at the desk writing.

PAUL GREEN

Dearest Eve. How are you? Have you missed me? What is new? How is work? I am still under constant observation. I must see the doctor at two each day. I am always hopeful. The doctors say that my teeth have caused it. It is not true. There is

something in the air. It is natural I feel sad. Nothing I do makes me feel right. All my hours go into longing for you and the hour of my return. I have little hope. What do you think? All my love. Paul.

(Lights fade. There is music. Smoke goes up from the stage floor. The stage is lit. Paul lies on the cot. He is covered with a sheet. A sound tape contains only the Hungarian phrases.)

PAUL GREEN

//Eve, I feel much worse.// I have a high fever.// My vision is blurred.

(Eve appears by Paul's side. He holds her.)

//Who knows why, but suddenly I am here next to you.// I just left Fured and suddenly here I am next to you.// Write to the captain in regard to this.// Tell him that I cannot bear it any longer.// That I am dying.// That I am going mad.// Tell him that he must release me.// That I cannot be of any use to Hungary.// That I am a peaceful man.

(Short pause.)

//Oh, no. I know that is not possible.// Every man must do his share.

(He cries.)

//There is no point.// We are all useless to Hungary.// We cannot save her.// Oh, Hungary, we cannot save you.

(Lights fade. There is music. Smoke goes up from the stage floor. The stage is lit. Eve is sitting at the table writing and Paul lies in bed unconscious. The following is performed without a language tape.)

EVE SANDOR

Paul Green, private, front line. A long time has passed and things are not any clearer. I know there is no front line and I know there is no war. I wish there were one. A war would end and you would return to me. I don't know where you are. You are where I am but never at the same time. My dearest, life escapes from us like blood out of a wound. Will we ever be whole again and in each other's arms? All my love, Eve.

(Lights fade. There is music. As the scenery is changed, smoke goes up from the stage floor.)

Scene 10

Scene 10

Mr` Sandor's living room. There is a table and two chairs. Mr` Sandor enters right. He carries a tray with a coffee pot and two cups. He stands with his back to the left, places the tray on the table and pours. All characters will wear goggles from here on. Their speech will be progressively convoluted. Their skin will show reddish spots as if of burns. Their clothes appear to have been exposed to ash dust and strange drippings.

ON TAPE: "Unit Ten. Basic sentences. Paul Green visits Mr` Sandor. They discuss the weather." The scene is performed without a language tape.

MR. SANDOR

Hello, Paul.

(Paul enters, Mr` Sandor turns.)

Would you like some coffee?

PAUL GREEN

Yes, thanks.

(Paul sits. Mr` Sandor gives Paul a cup, and takes the other to his chair. He sits.)

Perhaps tomorrow the weather will be good.

MR. SANDOR

Yes, the weather is bad. Perhaps tomorrow the weather will be good.

PAUL GREEN

In the morning I was warm. Now in the evening it's cold. Where's Eve?

MR. SANDOR

She went to town.

PAUL GREEN

But it's raining. In the winter she works. In the summer she studies. I haven't seen her since spring.

MR. SANDOR

Would you have a cigarette?

PAUL GREEN

Yes, please.

(*Mr` Sandor gives him a cigarette.*)

MR. SANDOR

Of course. Here's a match. How's the coffee?

PAUL GREEN

Very good.

(*Paul turns suddenly.*)

I think it's snowing.

MR. SANDOR

I don't think so. In the fall it doesn't snow.

PAUL GREEN

I hope so. This year was bad enough. I'd like some more coffee.

MR. SANDOR

Certainly.

(*Mr` Sandor starts to pour.*)

PAUL GREEN

Thanks. What time is it?

MR. SANDOR

Not six yet. Five.

PAUL GREEN

There's time for a movie from six to eight.

MR. SANDOR

It's raining very hard.

PAUL GREEN

That's true.

MR. SANDOR

(*Offering him another pack of cigarettes.*)

Have another cigarette.

(*Handing him matches.*)

Here is a match.

(*Mr` Sandor sits.*)

There's still more coffee.

PAUL GREEN

This cigarette is wet.

MR. SANDOR

Oh, I beg your pardon.

(*Handing him a cigarette.*)

Here's another one. You look much better.

PAUL GREEN

I am better.

MR. SANDOR

Is Fured a good hospital?

PAUL GREEN

Yes, very good.

(*Paul looks in the cup.*)

What's this?

(*Mr` Sandor looks in the cup.*)

MR. SANDOR

Oh, I beg your pardon.

(*Mr` Sandor takes an amorphous black object from the cup and looks at it carefully. He puts it in his pocket and sits.*)

PAUL GREEN

This coffee is cold. It may be my last cup and it's cold. Which is the way to the toilet?

(*Mr. Sandor points to the up left corner.*)

MR. SANDOR

The toilet is to the left.

(*Paul exits. Eve enters from the up right corner and walks to the down left center.*)

EVE SANDOR

Where is Paul?

MR. SANDOR

I haven't seen him since yesterday.

EVE SANDOR

Paul...

(*Lights fade. There is music. As the scenery is changed, smoke goes up from the stage floor.*)

Scene 11

Scene 11

The barbershop. The Barber sits on a chair on the left. Paul enters stage right, takes a few steps and stops. He wears a brown-green shirt and tie and a band around his arm.

ON TAPE: "Unit Eleven. Basic sentences. Paul Green goes to the barbershop." The sound tape contains only the Hungarian phrases.

PAUL GREEN

//Please, cut my hair.

BARBER

//Please, take a seat.

(*Paul sits. The Barber puts a white cloth around his neck.*)

//Are you Hungarian?

PAUL GREEN

//No. I am from the United States.

BARBER

//Are you a soldier?

PAUL GREEN

//Why yes.

(Paul lifts the cloth.)

//Look at my clothes.

BARBER

//Shall I cut it short in the back?

PAUL GREEN

//Please.

(*The Barber cuts Paul's hair. Neither speaks for awhile. Paul looks front.*)

PAUL GREEN

//... What's this...? //Eve is coming.... //She's coming....

(*Turning to look at Eve.*)

//... Eve....

(*The Barber turns Paul's head down. He cuts his hair. Eve appears on the up right corner.*)

BARBER

(*Speaking close to Paul's ear. He loses control progressively. He goes on his knees and grabs Paul by the leg.*)

//Tell me.// Is it permitted?// For me to ask you.// Please, tell me.// What does one say?// I want?// I want milk?// Please, give me beer?// Meat?// I'm very hungry?// It is the heart of the nation.// It is cold.// The earth is cold.//

PAUL GREEN

(*Standing abruptly.*)

//I'm very sorry.// I have to go now.// How much does a haircut cost?

BARBER

//This was a plain haircut.// The price is fifty filler.

PAUL GREEN

//That's cheap enough.// Have you cigarettes or matches?

BARBER

//I'm sorry but we have no cigarettes or matches.// We only cut hair and shave.// Would you like a shave, sir?

PAUL GREEN

(*Handing money to the Barber.*)

//No, thank you. That's cheap enough.

(*He turns his head towards Eve.*)

EVE SANDOR

//Let's go.

(*Eve exits. Paul turns towards the exit slowly. He lifts his arm as if reaching for Eve. He has lost her. He exits. Lights fade. There is music. As the scenery is changed, smoke goes up from the stage floor.*)

Scene 12

Scene 12

Eve lies on a blanket on the floor down right. There is a table and chair next to her. Mr` Sandor sits on a chair up left. He sleeps. Paul enters. He is in his underwear. He carries a drawer with clothes, places it on the floor and walks to Eve. The scene is performed without a language tape.

PAUL GREEN

Eve, I'm leaving. I can't take this any longer. You take care of the place or burn it if you want. I don't care what you do.

EVE SANDOR

Why don't you take me with you?

(*He sits.*)

PAUL GREEN

If you go, we'll never get anywhere. It is you who has polluted me. I am clean of body and mind.

EVE SANDOR

That's not so. I have not polluted you.

PAUL GREEN

It is you who have caused all the trouble.

EVE SANDOR

You are losing your brain, Paul. You are talking like a machine. You are saying what machines say.

PAUL GREEN

It must be true if machines say it.

(*She screams and hits him repeatedly.*)

I am sorry, Eve. I don't know what made me say that.

(*He hits the table with his fist. It breaks apart. He cries.*)

I didn't mean any of it. I don't have a mind. And I don't have a soul.

MR. SANDOR

(*Startled as if awakened from a nightmare. He remains so through the following scene.*)

What happened!

EVE SANDOR

Paul got angry, father, and he smashed the table.

(*Eve has a coughing attack.*)

MR. SANDOR

Is she ill!

PAUL GREEN

Why do you ask that?

MR. SANDOR

She's coughing!

PAUL GREEN

She always coughs.

MR. SANDOR

What's wrong with that!

PAUL GREEN

Nothing. She coughs, I throw up, and you have diarrhea.

MR. SANDOR

Let's call a doctor!

(Paul emits a loud and plaintive sound. Lights fade. There is music. As the scenery is changed, smoke goes up from the stage floor.)

Scene 13

Scene 13

There is a theatre curtain placed on the downstage posts. A puppet stand is placed on stage. On the floor of the puppet stage down right is a blanket. To the left of the blanket and facing it is a chair. To the right of the chair is a breakaway table. On the up left corner is a chair. Paul, Eve, and Mr` Sandor operate puppets whose appearance is identical to theirs. The following scene, which is the same as scene 12, is performed by the puppets.

PAUL GREEN

Eve, I'm leaving. I can't take this any longer. You take care of the place or burn it if you want. I don't care what you do.

EVE SANDOR

Why don't you take me with you?

(He sits.)

PAUL GREEN

If you go, we'll never get anywhere. It is you who has polluted me. I am clean of body and mind.

EVE SANDOR

That's not so. I have not polluted you.

PAUL GREEN

It is you who have caused all the trouble.

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PAUL GREEN

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(*She screams and hits him repeatedly.*)

I am sorry, Eve. I don't know what made me say that.

(*He hits the table with his fist. It breaks apart. He cries.*)

I didn't mean any of it. I don't have a mind. And I don't have a soul.

MR. SANDOR

(*Startled as if awakened from a nightmare. He remains so through the following scene.*)

What happened!

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She always coughs.

MR. SANDOR

What's wrong with that!

PAUL GREEN

Nothing. She coughs, I throw up, and you have diarrhea.

MR. SANDOR

Let's call a doctor!

(*Paul emits a loud and plaintive sound. Lights fade. There is music. As the scenery is changed, smoke goes up from the stage floor.*)

Scene 14

Scene 14

The actors set up for another puppet scene. There is a table center and a chair to the left and facing it. There are two drawers on the floor against the back wall, one to the right and one to the left. The puppet representing Eve sits at the table. The puppet representing Paul enters.

ON TAPE: "Unit Thirteen. Basic sentences. Paul and Eve pack their suitcase." The scene is performed without a language tape.

PAUL GREEN

Eve.

EVE SANDOR

Yes.

PAUL GREEN

Let's go.

EVE SANDOR

Yes.

(Paul gets a suitcase and puts it on the table. They each get the items of clothing indicated in the script from the drawers and put them in the suitcase.)

EVE SANDOR

Stockings. Five pairs of underpants.

PAUL GREEN

Eight pairs of socks.

EVE SANDOR

Five shirts. Three blouses.

PAUL GREEN

Trousers.

EVE SANDOR

Shorts. Six pairs of shorts. A skirt. A dress.

PAUL GREEN

Handkerchiefs. Seven handkerchiefs.

EVE SANDOR

Everything is here.

PAUL GREEN

Let's go.

(Mr` Sandor enters.)

MR. SANDOR

What's this?

EVE SANDOR

Please, father, come with us.

MR. SANDOR

Don't go.

(*Eve embraces Mr. Sandor.*)

EVE SANDOR

Good bye, father.

(*Walking to Paul.*)

Good bye.

(*Lights fade. There is music. As the scenery is changed, smoke goes up from the stage floor. The puppet stage is removed.*)

Scene 15

Scene 15

Mr. Sandor's livingroom. There is a table center and a chair to the left. Eve sits on the chair. Paul enters. They are both in a state of physical and emotional restraint which hampers their speech and movement.

ON TAPE: "Unit Fourteen. Basic sentences. Paul and Eve Green pack their suitcase." The scene is performed without a language tape.

PAUL GREEN

Eve.

EVE SANDOR

Yes.

PAUL GREEN

Let's go.

EVE SANDOR

Yes.

(*Paul gets a suitcase and puts it on the table. They each get the items of clothing indicated in the script from the drawers and put them in the suitcase.*)

Stockings. Five pairs of underpants.

PAUL GREEN

Eight pairs of socks.

EVE SANDOR

Five shirts. Three blouses.

PAUL GREEN

Trousers.

EVE SANDOR

Shorts. Six pairs of shorts. A skirt. A dress.

PAUL GREEN

Handkerchiefs. Seven handkerchiefs.

EVE SANDOR

Everything is here.

PAUL GREEN

Let's go.

EVE SANDOR

(*Taking a revolver from the suitcase.*)

What's this?

PAUL GREEN

(*Reaching for the gun.*)

A gun.

(*First she resists. Then she releases it. He puts it in his pocket. Mr. Sandor enters.*)

MR. SANDOR

What's this?

PAUL GREEN

(*Taking the suitcase.*)

Good bye.

EVE SANDOR

(*Embracing Mr. Sandor.*)

Good bye, father.

MR. SANDOR

Don't go.

EVE SANDOR

Please come with us.

MR. SANDOR

I live here and work here. My family lives here.

EVE SANDOR

Please, father, come with us.

MR. SANDOR

It doesn't matter, Eve. There's no place to go.

EVE SANDOR

Good bye.

(*Eve walks downstage and speaks front.*)

My Danube, you are my wisdom. My river that comes to me, to my city, my Budapest... I say good bye. As I die, my last thought is of you, my sick friend. Here is your end. Here is my hand. I don't know myself apart from you. I don't know you apart from myself. This is the hour. We die at last, my Danube. Good bye.

(*She joins Paul. They start to exit right.*)

MR. SANDOR

Eve!

(*There is a brilliant white flash of light. Black out.*)

END